

The Grader

December Agenda Item Presented to the State Board of Education

The following Background/Summary was submitted to the SBE for review at the December 21st Meeting:

On May 18, 2015, the State Board adopted the “Priority” label criteria to identify schools which “demonstrate a below average level of performance” in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years with an amendment to further explore implications for alternative schools as well as federal improvement labels for non-Title I schools. In order to allow for a transition of the state accountability system, SB1289 prohibits A-F Letter Grade assignments for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. This presentation to the Arizona State Board of Education is regarding the method to identify schools which “demonstrate a below average level of performance” using criteria developed by the Department and adopted by the State Board of Education as required by SB1289. Under A.R.S. 15-241, schools which “demonstrate a below average level of performance” were previously assigned a “D” letter grade or its equivalent.

On August 6, 2015, the Department received a new waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for ESEA flexibility through the 2015-2016 school year. Continued flexibility from ESEA/NCLB requires Arizona to implement the criteria outlined in its application to ensure the lowest performing schools receive support. Until a new A-F Letter Grade Accountability System is in place, Arizona will continue to use a state-developed method to “ensure that all schools are held accountable and receive necessary support under a parallel and/or supplemental system” as described in its ESEA flexibility waiver.

To ensure balance and fairness during this accountability transition, the Department will publicly report all Title I and non-Title I schools which meet the Reward, Focus, and Priority criteria outlined in the state’s approved ESEA flexibility waiver. As required by SB1289, the Department will maintain transparency during this accountability transition by reporting academic performance indicators for each school and district annually.

Recommendation to the Board

The State Board adopt the “Priority” label criteria approved in Arizona’s request for ESEA flexibility and adopted by the State Board in May 2015 to identify alternative schools which “demonstrate a below average level of performance” in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years.

See criteria [here](#).

In This Issue:

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SUPPORT AND INNOVATION: IMPORTANT DUE DATES & REMINDERS

ADE CONNECT

December 30, 2015 - *Fiscal Year 15* Grant Completion Reports are due no later than December 30, 2015.

December 15, 2015 - *Fiscal Year 16* Priority and Focus Grant Budget deadline has been extended to December 15, 2015. If the initial budget has not been submitted in Grants Management Enterprise by close of business, 12/15/15, the LEA will forfeit their FY 16 allocation. The budget narrative must reflect action steps in the SCIP (LCIP for single site LEAs) in order to be approved.

December 31, 2015 - *Fiscal Year 16* SIG Cohort 2 and 3 Grant Budget deadline.



Common Logon

L/SCIP must be updated in ALEAT.

January 15, 2016 - Second Quarter Student Data Analysis and Trends Reflection

Email your Specialist!

January 15, 2016 - Detailed Expenditure Report (Grants Management Report) for July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. Include journal adjusting detail. All expenditures out of this grant, from 7/1/15 through 12/31/15, should be accounted for in this report.

NEW STAFF MEMBER JOINS ACCOUNTABILITY!

Melody R. Herne joins the Accountability team at ADE in the position of Data Driven Accountability Manager. Melody brings over eighteen years of practical experience having served in the K-12 field as a math teacher, site and district based administrator, and instructional specialist. Melody completed her undergraduate work at the University of Arizona and is all but dissertation in her doctoral studies through Arizona State University. Among her many duties, Melody will provide technical assistance to the field in managing LEA's data. Her support and innovation will help manage the development and implementation of tools and resources critical to helping LEAs improve high school graduation, dropout rates, and re-engagement and increase the College and Career Readiness capacity of LEAs.

ACHIEVE'S FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is ADE going back to the State Board if they already adopted the Priority criteria to identify schools with "below average" levels of performance?

SBE members requested an amendment requiring ADE to further analyze how the proposed criteria would impact alternative schools and how Reward, Focus, and Priority labels might be applied to non-Title I schools during the transition of the state accountability system.

When will we learn more information about the new accountability system discussed in SB1289?

Any materials (white paper, presentations, etc.) ADE provides to the A-F Subcommittee will also be made available on the ADE Accountability website. Please refer to the State Board of Education website for a schedule of committee meetings, agenda items, etc.

When will I know who is in my Bottom 25%?

ADE will not identify a Bottom 25% subgroup for high stakes accountability purposes until AMO targets are identified and new Reward, Focus, Priority schools are designated based on 2016 AzMERIT data. Schools may use prior year assessment data to estimate their own Bottom Quartile using guidance available [here](#).

When will ADE tell me my school can exit Focus or Priority status?

Schools may exit Focus or Priority status based on eligibility and their performance on the 2015 AzMERIT; however, schools may also be re-identified for Focus or Priority status based on their performance on the 2016 AzMERIT. Therefore, ADE will notify schools of their official status when 2016 AzMERIT data are available. Criteria for identifying new Focus and Priority schools are available [here](#).